

# ELON MUSK FOUND TO BE DYING FROM LYING

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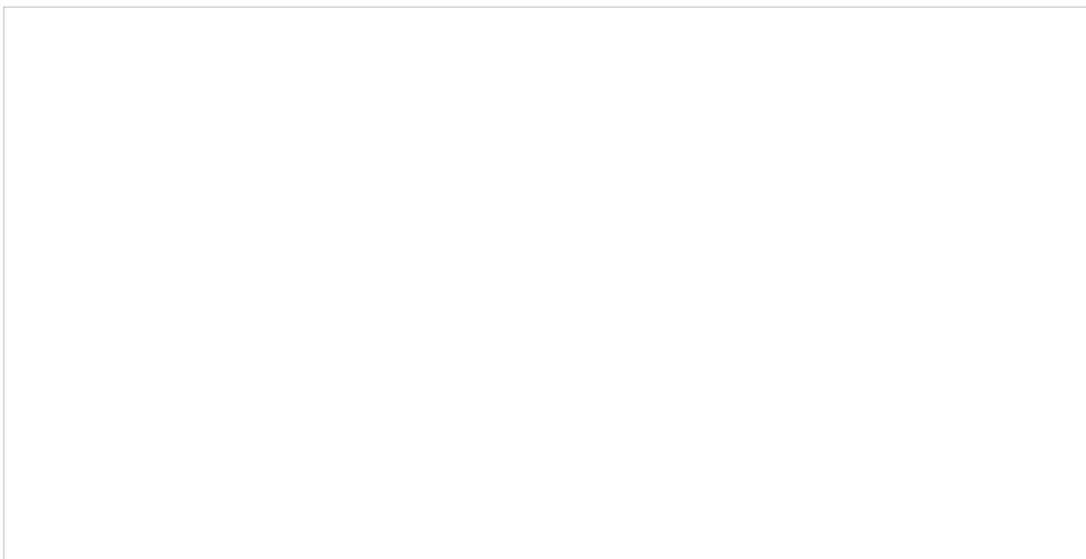
## Elon Musk's creep show

Caught in a series of lies about his willingness to fight Mark Zuckerberg, the billionaire's disturbing spiral accelerates



[CASEY NEWTON](#)

Today let's talk — for the last time, I hope — about the derailed martial arts bout between Mark Zuckerberg and Elon Musk, and the latter's reckless threats to visit the Meta CEO at his home and broadcast it to the world.



Part of me hesitates to spill yet more ink on a battle that no part of me has ever believed would take place. Last week [I wrote here about the importance of bringing skepticism to Musk's posts on X](#), the former Twitter, and encouraged my peers in the press to consider not covering them at all. It's clear that Musk seeks attention for attention's sake, and given that so many of his promises come to nothing, ignoring him often feels like the best approach.

At the same time, Musk remains the owner of one of the most prominent social networks, despite all he has done over the past year to diminish it. He is also co-founder and CEO of several other companies that are salient in the public imagination, including Tesla, Neuralink, and SpaceX, which among other things operates the Starlink service that provides internet service in Ukraine and more than 60 other countries.

All of which is to say I think it matters if such a person is appearing to lose his grip on reality. And after another few days of unhinged behavior, I don't know what other conclusion about Musk you could reasonably draw.

(Unfortunately, telling this story involves a fair bit of me writing "And then Musk said *this!* And then Zuckerberg said *that!*" in a fashion that I find obnoxious but unavoidable. If you're already up to speed on the back and forth, feel free to skip the next section.)

II.

When last we left this story, Zuckerberg had proposed fighting Musk on August 26. But Musk had begged off, saying that he needed an MRI and [would need to have surgery first](#).

That seemed to settle the question for the foreseeable future — but then on Friday Musk [posted a fresh set of fictions](#).

He revived the delusion that it would take place in Rome, in an unspecified but "epic location"; said "the fight will be managed by my and Zuck's foundations (not UFC)," and promised that the fight would be broadcast on both X and Meta platforms.

As before, Zuckerberg hadn't agreed to any of this. Among other issues, giving the fight away for free would mean that it raised dramatically less money for charity. For Meta, from a public-relations standpoint, raising money for charity is a necessary pretext for doing the match at all — otherwise it's just two rich tech guys fighting, and we get enough of that from quarterly earnings calls.

On Saturday, Musk took things to an absurd new level. He texted Zuckerberg to ask "Wanna do a practice bout at your house next week?" We know this because Musk's biographer, Walter Isaacson, [shared a screenshot of the conversation yesterday](#). (I confirmed that the messages are real. Although I have no idea what a "practice bout" is here — Musk expects his opponent in the fight to also be his training partner?)

In any case, Zuckerberg declined. But Musk ignored his reply. "I will be in Palo Alto on Monday," he wrote. "Let's fight in your Octagon."

At that point, Zuckerberg had had enough. "I think we can all agree Elon isn't serious and it's time to move on," he [posted on Threads](#). "Elon won't confirm a date, then says he needs surgery, and now asks to do a practice round in my backyard instead. If Elon ever gets serious about a real date and official event, he knows how to reach me. Otherwise, time to move on."

Musk didn't move on, though. Instead, he posted repeatedly on Monday about visiting Zuckerberg's home in Palo Alto uninvited. "Knock, knock ... challenge accepted ... open the door [@finkd](#)," he wrote, using Zuckerberg's old Twitter user name. And because it had been a few days since Musk referenced his 52-year-old balls online, he added: "Thought you might want some tea, so I brought the bags."

Two hours later, Musk upped the ante, saying he would take a Tesla to Palo Alto on Monday night and [broadcast the drive on X](#), "so you can monitor our adventure in real-time! If we get lucky and Zuck ... actually answers the door, the fight is on!"

Like so much of what Musk has had to say about the fight, all this seemed obviously false. For one, Musk's jet [landed earlier today in Cleveland](#). Two, Zuckerberg wasn't even home.

"Mark is traveling right now and isn't in Palo Alto," a spokeswoman told me today. "Also, Mark takes this sport seriously and isn't going to fight someone who randomly shows up at his door."

### III.

By now we are generally familiar with the kind of edgelord behavior Musk is engaging in here: making a threat — "I am coming to your house to fight you" — but doing so in a manner that, if pressed, he can throw his hands up and protest that it was all just a joke.

And yet, as the *Washington Post's* [Drew Harwell noted](#), Musk's behavior seemed to violate his platform's rules in the precise way that he accused journalists of doing during [last year's imbroglio over the @ElonJet account](#), which tracked his movements on Twitter before Musk terminated it. (Musk famously complained that the jet was posting his ["assassination coordinates"](#).)

Surely broadcasting himself driving to Zuckerberg's house to confront him would represent just as serious a violation. (Arguably more serious, given that [@ElonJet](#) posted on a multi-hour delay, and most people don't have physical access to airport tarmacs.)

The hypocrisy here, however unsurprising, remains striking.

To be clear, Zuckerberg is in no physical danger from Musk — and not just because Musk, by his own admission, has barely trained for a fight at all. More important is the fact that due to very real threats against Zuckerberg's safety, and his family's safety, [Meta will spend \\$14 million this year on security for him](#). Musk will be at [higher risk relying on his Tesla's "full self-driving" capabilities](#) on US 280 than Zuckerberg would be of Musk showing up at the door.

Again, what's important here is not whether an MMA fight takes place. It's that the world's richest man — a person with [a security clearance](#) and [government contracts](#) and more than a little power over Ukraine's continued internet access — is threatening to hunt down a rival CEO at his house and challenge him to a duel.

Posts like these are the sort of thing X might remove from the platform for violating its community standards — if it had any.

To his dwindling fan base, all this will no doubt play as more swaggering derring-do from their real-life Iron Man. But to his employees, his investors, his family and his friends — I wonder if they don't see something stranger, and darker, going on.

For the rest of us, it's another cringeworthy sideshow on the road to X's eventual bankruptcy. And one more example of Musk as that most familiar figure: the noisy forum shitposter, forever writing checks with his mouth that his body can't cash.

## [Elon Musk's father blasts Mark Zuckerberg cage fight as a cynical ploy to gain publicity for X and brands their spat 'so high school'](#)



Elon Musk says his son's spat with Facebook boss Mark Zuckerberg is 'high school and banal' suggesting the much-anticipated cage fight between the two is a publicity stunt